

Montana Water Court  
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MONTANA WATER COURT, YELLOWSTONE DIVISION  
YELLOWSTONE RIVER ABOVE AND INCLUDING BRIDGER CREEK BASIN  
BASIN 43B  
PRELIMINARY DECREE

\*\*\*\*\*

CLAIMANTS: Brett A. Todd; Julie R. Todd

**CASE 43B-0695-R-2022**

43B 10348-00

OBJECTOR: United States of America (Bureau of Land  
Management)

**NOTICE OF FILING OF MASTER'S REPORT**

This Master's Report was filed with the Montana Water Court on the above stamped date. Please review this report carefully.

You may file a written objection to this Master's Report within **10 days** of the stamped date if you disagree or find errors with the Master's finding of fact, conclusion of law, or recommendations. Rule 23, W.R.Adj.R. If the Master's Report was mailed to you, the Montana Rules of Civil Procedure allow an additional 3 days to be added to the 10-day objection period. Rule 6(d), M.R.Civ.P. If you file an objection, you must mail a copy of the objection to all parties on the service list found at the end of the Master's Report. The original objection and a certificate of mailing to all parties on the service list must be filed with the Water Court.

If you do not file a timely objection, the Water Court will conclude that you agree with the content of this Master's Report.

## **MASTER'S REPORT**

The United States of America (Bureau of Land Management) objected to Brett A. Todd and Julie R. Todd claim 43B 10348-00. On May 10, 2023, the parties filed a Stipulation To Resolve Objection. The Stipulation is viewable in the Court's FullCourt Enterprise case management system.

### **APPLICABLE LAW**

A properly filed Statement of Claim for Existing Water Right is prima facie proof of its content pursuant to section 85-2-227, MCA. This prima facie proof may be contradicted and overcome by other evidence that proves, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the elements of the claim do not accurately reflect the beneficial use of the water right as it existed prior to July 1, 1973. This is the burden of proof for every assertion that a claim is incorrect including for claimants objecting to their own claims. Rule 19, W.R.Adj.R.

### **FINDING OF FACT**

The Preliminary Decree states that the place of use is section 1, T1S, R15E, SWEET GRASS. The place of use should be the NE section 1, T1S, R15E, SWEET GRASS.

### **CONCLUSION OF LAW**

The settlement filed by the parties is sufficient to contradict and overcome the prima facie claim.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based upon the above Finding of Fact and Conclusion of Law, this Master recommends that the Court make the changes specified in the Finding of Fact to correct the Preliminary Decree for this Basin. A Post Decree Abstract of Water Right Claim is served with this Report to confirm the recommended changes have been made in the state's centralized record system.

**ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED AND DATED BELOW**

Service Via USPS Mail:

Brett A. Todd  
Julie R. Todd  
664 HWY 10 E  
Big Timber, MT 59011

Service Via Email:

Romney S. Philpott, Trial Attorney  
US Department of Justice  
ENRD, Natural Resources Section  
999 18th Street, South Terrace Suite 370  
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**POST DECREE**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**YELLOWSTONE RIVER, ABOVE & INCLUDING BRIDGER CREEK**  
**BASIN 43B**

**Water Right Number:** 43B 10348-00 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** BRETT A TODD  
664 HWY 10 E  
BIG TIMBER, MT 59011

JULIE R TODD  
664 HWY 10 E  
BIG TIMBER, MT 59011

**Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1917

**Type of Historical Right:** USE

**Purpose (use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** A SPECIFIC FLOW RATE HAS NOT BEEN DECREED BECAUSE THIS USE CONSISTS OF STOCK DRINKING DIRECTLY FROM THE SOURCE, OR FROM A DITCH SYSTEM. THE FLOW RATE IS LIMITED TO THE MINIMUM AMOUNT HISTORICALLY NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THIS PURPOSE.

**Volume:** THIS RIGHT INCLUDES THE AMOUNT OF WATER CONSUMPTIVELY USED FOR STOCK WATERING PURPOSES AT THE RATE OF 30 GALLONS PER DAY PER ANIMAL UNIT. ANIMAL UNITS SHALL BE BASED ON REASONABLE CARRYING CAPACITY AND HISTORICAL USE OF THE AREA SERVICED BY THIS WATER SOURCE.

**Source Name:** SPRING, UNNAMED TRIBUTARY OF YELLOWSTONE RIVER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Qtr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		SWNWNE	1	1S	15E	SWEET GRASS

**Period of Diversion:** JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE

**Period of Use:** JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Place of Use:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Qtr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1			NE	1	1S	15E	SWEET GRASS